

William Berkeley Lewis to Andrew Jackson, April 19, 1844, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

class=MsoNormal>MAJOR WILLIAM B. LEWIS TO JACKSON.

Washington, April 19, 1844.

Dear Genl, I wrote you a hasty letter yesterday in which I informed you that I had reason to believe the Texian Treaty would be sent up to the Senate on that day, (yesterday.) I met with Mr. Calhoun 1 last evening at a dinner party given by the Austrian Minister, and enquired of him whether the Treaty had gone up—he told me it had not, but that

1 Appointed Secretary of State Mar. 6, 1844.

class=MsoNormal>0304 280 it would certainly be sent up on Monday next. I learned another thing from Mr. Calhoun which I was very glad to hear, and which may have a happy effect upon this important question. He remarked to me that the treaty had been detained from the Senate, for the last few days, with the hope mainly of being able to make some satisfactory arrangement with Mexico before sending it up. I asked him if he thought that probable? Yes, was his reply—and, he added, if we can do that, no ground for cavil will be left to those who are opposed to annexation. The truth is I think the Secretary of State has managed this affair with a good deal of tact, or rather diplomatic skill. 2 His having given notice to the public, thro' the organ of the administration, the Madisonian, that a Treaty had been made and signed, showed to the Mexican Minister, at once, that his threats, etc. etc. had no effect here, as a Treaty had actually been made in defiance of them. The Mexican Minister seeing this and fearing they may lose every thing, if he permits the present opportunity to escape, I am not at all surprised at his now

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manifesting a disposition to enter into a friendly and mutually satisfactory arrangement with the U. States on behalf of his Government in relation to Texas.

2 Writing to Jackson on Apr. 26, 1844, Lewis said: "Mr. Calhoun, it is said has unfortunately placed the necessity of annexing Texas to the United States exclusively upon the ground of the protection of Slavery in the Southern States! The Democratic Senators from the non-slaveholding states protest against this, because it would be death to them politically, if they were to vote for the Treaty based upon such principles. This shows a great want of tact as well as judgment, if the fact be as represented, in Mr. Calhoun. He should have placed the measure upon broad national principles."

As you may not get the Richmond Enquirer, I send you, herewith, the two last numbers, which contain able and scathing articles against J. Q. Adams, in relation to the Florida Treaty of 1819. I do not see how it is possible he can extricate himself from the difficulties in which he is placed by the damning expositions of "Randolph of Roanoke." And yet, my dear General, however badly Mr. Adams may have acted, in relation to this unfortunate Treaty, I can not see how Mr. Monroe could have been less culpable. He himself had previously maintained, if I am not greatly mistaken, that Louisiana extended Westwardly to the Rio Grande, yet he approved and sent up to the senate for ratification, a Treaty fixing our South Western boundary 700 miles East of that river! This is strange, passing strange; but I will suspend my opinion, as regards Mr. Monroe, in relation to this shameless abandonment of our rights, until further developments are made. I am particularly anxious to hear what Mr. Adams has to say for himself—to know upon what ground he will place his defence!

I saw, a few evenings ago, Mr. Persico, 3 the Italian artist , who has been employed by the Government in preparing statuary for the Capitol, and he enquired very affectionately after you and desired me, the next time I wrote, to present to you his kindest and most affectionate regards. He has just returned from Italy where he has been engaged, for the last 4 or 5 years, in cutting and preparing groups of Statues for the right

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3 Luigi Persico, who made the sculptures for the east tympanum of the Capitol, and the Columbus on the east steps.

class=MsoNormal>0305 281 and left hand sides of the steps of the East Portico. If I am not mistaken, in my recollection, he made a Bust, in marble, of yourself and sent it to you from Italy. He is a good fellow, and as mercurial as ever! I again beg, my dear Genl, to be kindly remembered to each member of your family, and that you will believe me to be very truly Your friend,